Carissa Foster Riser

Methods Trail #2

For my first methods trail I had the opportunity to work with my mother’s 6th grade extended day study group; during that methods trail I set up an interactive Smart Board review of the 5 themes of geography. As expected, the students truly enjoyed the lesson and it kept their attention much better than a traditional lecture. So for my next methods trail I wanted to present her students with more interactive technology I was pretty sure they hadn’t used before, *Prezi*. For this methods trail I used her classroom students who were wrapping up their “Brotherhood” unit. During the month of February, black history month, all the sixth graders at her school are required to do a research project on an influential figure in history. Last month I used *Rubistar* to create a rubric to grade the students’ presentations of their projects; however, I felt it would be a great extension to the unit to create some type of technological presentation as well. By the sixth grade students’ have been introduced and many times pretty comfortable with PowerPoint Presentations, so I wanted to introduce them to *Prezi*. According to the site, “Prezi is a virtual whiteboard that transforms presentations from monologues into conversations: enabling people to see, understand, and remember ideas”. The first obstacle to this methods trail was getting the small group of students I was working with logged on, since a valid email address was required. The solution was for my mother, her other classroom teacher, and myself to quickly create accounts and allow the students to work in groups of 3. Right off the bat the students thought it was a very neat concept and cool to look at, but for sixth graders it was difficult to get them understand all the little details that go into a *Prezi* versus a PowerPoint. The students had fun playing around with different types of *Prezis,* but in the end all but one group decided to use PowerPoint to do their extension presentation.